

White House: Iraqi seized American national

WASHINGTON (R) — Iraq has taken a U.S. civilian contractor into custody, and American officials are working to secure the man's immediate release, a White House official said Friday. A United Nations spokesman said in Kuwait Friday that American contractor Chad Hall was taken at about 1 p.m. (1000 GMT) Thursday about two kilometres from Camp Khor, the old Iraqi naval base that serves as the northern sector headquarters of the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission. "We are trying to do whatever we can for his release," said observer mission spokesman Abdul Latif Khabbaj. "We know the border is not marked, that is why we have these problems around here." The area where Hall was detained is inside the demilitarised zone that spans both sides of the Kuwait-Iraq border. The White House official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the U.S. government was working with the Polish embassy in Baghdad and the United Nations to secure the man's freedom. A State Department official said the United States had raised the case with the Iraqi interests section in Washington and the Iraqi mission to the U.N. A defence official said the State Department was trying to win the American's release through diplomatic means rather than any sort of military action.

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Israel sceptical over Egyptian peace efforts

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli officials Friday welcomed Egypt's attempt to revitalise Middle East peace talks but sought to dampen expectations of a breakthrough following an offer to widen Palestinian participation.

They said a surprise visit by Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa had made no significant progress on the main issue of limited self-rule.

"He brought all kinds of ideas on the establishment of Palestinian autonomy, not nothing new," a senior official said. "All these ideas were rejected."

Officials said they hoped a compromise offer to let Palestinians attend multilateral talks on refugees would improve the somber atmosphere at the main bilateral peace talks.

Palestinians declined to comment on the Musa visit, saying they were awaiting information from Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in Tunis.

The Israeli caution contrasted with Mr. Musa's optimism on returning to Cairo, where he said he hoped Israeli negotiators would return to the next round of talks with Palestinians with "positive" orders.

The U.S.-sponsored talks in Washington on Oct. 21 will be the seventh between Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestinians of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Separate sets of multilateral talks bringing in more Middle East and Western countries are being held in tandem.

Egypt has intensified its diplomatic efforts recently to push the talks forward on the Palestinian and Syrian fronts.

"The Egyptians can play a role, not as a mediator or go-between, but because of their influence with the Palestinians," the official said.

Israel's new Labour government had hoped on taking office in July to make faster progress with the Palestinians than with arch foes such as Syria. But talks on interim self-rule for the 1.75 million Palestinians under Israeli military occupation have bogged down.

Mr. Musa, who met a senior PLO official before his lightning visit to Israel, proposed expanding the number of seats for a planned Palestinian council to administer autonomy, Israeli officials said.

He also presented ideas which would make the council appear

more like a legislature. Israel rejects the idea of a legislature which it regards as a feature of an independent state.

Mr. Musa and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said a compromise had been reached with the Palestinians to allow Palestinian exiles to attend all five of multilateral talks provided they were members of the Palestinian National Council (PNC).

The Palestinians have not yet announced their agreement to the deal.

The previous right-wing Likud government had insisted on talking only to West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians and had boycotted the Meawaleh sessions on refugees and economic cooperation.

Mr. Musa repeated Israel's announcement on the Palestinian participation, saying: "An agreement has been reached for Israel to attend the five (multilateral) sessions, within a clear framework, and with the participation of Palestinians in the five sessions."

Mr. Musa's visit came amid speculation that Egypt was pushing for a summit between

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Jordan cautiously welcomes Israeli move on diaspora delegates

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan Friday cautiously welcomed Israel's decision to accept Palestinians in the diaspora as negotiators in multilateral peace talks as the first step towards wider Palestinian participation in the bilateral phase but said that the Jewish state has to do more in order to advance the peace process.

Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber as well as Dr. Fayez Tarawneh, the overall head of the Jordanian delegation to the multilateral talks, said that while the Israeli move, announced by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Thursday, bodes well for the peace process it was not enough to make the talks succeed.

"I think it is a positive step in the right direction, but not enough," Dr. Abo Jaber told the Jordan Times. "The Palestinians, regardless of anyone's objections or reservations, should be able to attend the peace talks at every level."

"Eventually, we hope, they will participate at all levels, in-

cluding the bilateral level," the minister said. "We would have hoped they were included this next development."

While announcing the Israeli acceptance of Palestinians living outside the occupied territories in the multilateral talks on water, economic cooperation, the environment, arms control and refugees, Mr. Peres reiterated that Palestinians living in Arab East Jerusalem and members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) would not be accepted.

Dr. Tarawneh, who is also a senior member of Jordan's delegation to the bilateral talks, said he did not expect any significant shift in the course of the regional talks with the participation of diaspora Palestinians.

"We have not reached the stage of negotiations in the multilateral yet," Dr. Tarawneh noted in a telephone interview. "The discussions are still taking place in a seminar format and we have linked progress (the regional talks) with progress on the

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Habash: Armed struggle will continue

By Jane Arraf
Reuters

AMMAN — Radical Palestinian leader George Habash dismissed Israel's latest Middle East peace concessions on Friday as "superficial" and said armed struggle against the Jewish state must continue.

Dr. Habash told Reuters and the television news agency Visions in an interview that a new opposition alliance of 10 Palestinian groups which he heads would continue to pressure the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to withdraw from the talks.

He dismissed Israeli concessions like Thursday's decision to let Palestinians from the diaspora join the peace process as bypassing basic issues such as Israeli settlement-building and land and water rights in the occupied territories.

"I don't deny that Israel is trying to give concessions... but I thought deeply about these concessions and I found they were superficial," he said.

Dr. Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) is one of the largest PLO groups after Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah. It united last month with Nayef Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the fundamentalist Hamas and seven other groups opposing the talks.

Dr. Habash, who met Mr. Arafat Wednesday to discuss their differences, said a widespread strike two weeks ago in the occupied territories in response to a call by the Damascus-based alliance showed growing opposition to the negotiations.

Opponents of the peace talks, which resume on Oct. 21, say provisions such as interim Palestinian self-government being discussed with Israel sell out the Palestinian cause. But Dr. Habash said Mr. Arafat showed no sign at their meeting of changing his view.

"I haven't felt until this moment that Abu Ammar has in his mind a fundamental change," he said.

"But we hope that with continued activity of the 10 factions a common Palestinian will crystallise enough that the official leadership of the PLO cannot but take its view into account," Dr. Habash told Reuters and Visions.

He said there could be unity in

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Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, Arab charity march to raise funds for Al Amal Cancer Centre (Petra photo)

Thousands turn out to march and raise funds for cancer centre

Donors pledge over JD 4 million

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Thousands of Jordanians of all ages and from all walks of life turned out Friday to participate in a march to raise funds for the Kingdom's first cancer centre. Organisers said that by 6 p.m. Friday they had received pledges of up to JD 4 million for the JD 14-million Al Amal Cancer Centre being built at the University of Jordan.

The march was part of week-long fund-raising activities organised by the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), including a door-to-door collection drive by 22,000 school students, a sponsored school drive and a live programme on Jordan Television where donations were accepted from everyone.

A soccer match and a concert crowned the activities Friday evening.

Chief Chamberlain Prince

Ra'd Ben Zeid, deputising for Her Majesty Queen Noor, led Friday's marchers along with GUVS Chairman Abdullah Khatib, famous Syrian comedian Dureid Laham and several television stars.

The march, which featured schoolchildren, some of them as young as six years, members of clubs and voluntary societies (there are over 600 societies associated with GUVS), businessmen, housewives, government officials, private sector employees and others, started from the Al Hussein Sports City and wound through University Road and turned left towards Mecca Street and branched off through Gardens Street to return to the Sports City. The total area covered was around 10 kilometres.

It was well worth the effort, as organisers as well as participants put it. "It is the least we could do to offer to such a noble cause," said marcher Sameer Sultan, a

student.

Harout Nalbadian, said: "It was Dr. Khatib's sincere call and dedicated efforts that encouraged me to march today. It's great to be helping out."

Dr. Khatib told the Jordan Times the GUVS was seeking to raise JD 3.5 million through the week-long activities to finance the construction costs of the centre before getting into purchasing equipment. "Five years ago the idea of this hospital was just a dream," said Dr. Khatib, who has been recently pursuing the idea for a long time. "We set out with JD 1.5 million and we are already near the completion of the hospital thanks to the generous donations from people from all over the country. "The dream will soon become a reality."

The Jordanian leadership has taken a keen interest in the

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Willy Brandt, architect of ostpolitik, dies at 78

BONN (Agencies) — Former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, an exile from Nazism who became one of the world's leading statesmen, has died aged 78 after a long battle with cancer.

The gravel-voiced social democrat, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1971 for his "ostpolitik" of détente with Eastern Europe, died Thursday at his home near Bonn. He had been ill for months.

German paid tribute to the social democratic leader, one of the giants of modern European history who helped rehabilitate Germany internationally after the horrors of Nazism and World War II.

Leaders of his Social Democratic Party (SPD) wept as they honoured him at a party meeting and Parliamentary speaker Rita Suessmuth, her voice breaking with emotion, read a eulogy at a hushed session of the lower house of parliament.

Conservative Chancellor Helmut Kohl, a political rival who became a close friend in recent years, called him an outstanding "German patriot, European and citizen of the world alike."

"With his wisdom and experience of life he contributed much to making Germans reconciled with their history," Mr. Kohl said. "I myself am indebted to him for wise advice, especially in the last few years."

Attendees placed flowers on the seat Mr. Brandt had occupied in parliament and mourners laid red roses outside his house in the quiet Rhineland village of Uckel. Flags flew at half-mast outside parliament and SPD headquarters.

Officials in President Richard von Weizsäcker's office said the president would lead a memorial ceremony for Mr. Brandt in Ber-



Willy Brandt (1913-1992)

King sends condolences to Germany

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday sent cables to German President Richard von Weizsäcker, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the family of former German Chancellor Willy Brandt, condoling them over the death of Mr. Brandt.

King Hussein highlighted in the cables, which were sent in his name and on behalf of the Jordanian people and government, his meetings with the deceased and his role in enhancing relations between Jordan and Germany and lauded his stance on Jordan and Arab issues and commending his policy of openness in international issues.

He took the alias Willy Brandt and worked as a journalist in Scandinavia and on the republican side during Spain's civil war.

Mr. Brandt returned to the ruins of divided and occupied Berlin in 1945 and became mayor of West Berlin in 1957. The West's hesitant response

Tributes poured in from around the world.

The White House hailed Mr. Brandt as "an historic figure and European leader."

British Prime Minister John Major said he had been a champion of liberty and French President Francois Mitterrand called him "a man of justice and peace."

Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said: "I am proud to have had a real friendship with Willy Brandt, whom the world rightly describes as a great democrat."

Several commentators said that for all his political accomplishment, Mr. Brandt, a complex man who was married three times and whose public moods oscillated between jollity and melancholy, could be difficult personally.

"He was economical with the gift of friendship," said Johannes Rau, SPD state premier of North Rhine-Westphalia.

David Binder, a New York Times journalist who wrote a biography of Mr. Brandt, said: "Willy Brandt was a man who was much loved but could muster only a little love for others."

Born Herbert Karl Frahm, illegitimate son of a Luebeck shop-keeper on Dec. 18, 1913, he was a militant socialist in his youth who fled to Norway after Hitler took power in 1933.

He took the alias Willy Brandt and worked as a journalist in Scandinavia and on the republican side during Spain's civil war.

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Security Council imposes 'no-fly' zone in Bosnia

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The Security Council Friday imposed a no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina to prevent attacks by Serbian warplanes, but rejected aerial patrols and shoot-down orders. The 15-member council voted 14-0, with an abstention by China, to create the air-exclusion zone, warning that it would urgently consider "further measures necessary to enforce the ban" in case of violations — a reference to military action. The ban is effective immediately. In the event of continued violations, the council may later authorise aerial surveillance and military action against invading aircraft. "Anyone who thinks they can flout this ban without being found out will be badly surprised," British Ambassador David Hannay told reporters before consultations started. "And anyone who thinks that having been found out that no action will be taken also will be badly surprised," he said. Implementation and deployment of monitors will be decided by the secretary-general and the European Community monitoring mission, he said. Monitors are expected to be deployed in Bosnia, Serbia-Montenegro and Croatia and in territory within Bosnia controlled by Bosnian, Serbs. They will be aided by information collected by aerial surveillance outside the Balkans. (See related story on page 5)

Deadlock persists over Palestinian hunger-strike

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Palestinians and Israelis accused each other Friday of stalling over a 13-day-long hunger strike by 10,000 Palestinians prisoners that has sparked widespread unrest in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Palestinian lawyers said Israeli authorities reneged on an agreement to allow them to visit hunger-striking at two key West Bank jails Thursday.

"It seems the authorities have chosen the path of escalation and are preventing lawyers from finding out what is going on inside the prisons while trying to break the strikes," said Sayyad, a key mediator, said.

The Israeli prisons authority, responsible for nearly half the hunger-striking, said in a statement on Friday that "radicals" from outside the prisons had forced inmates to incorporate demands which pose a "security threat" to Israel.

The hunger-strike, the biggest since a 20-day fast by prisoners at the start of the Palestinian uprising in 1987, seems to have breathed new life into the nearly five-year-old revolt.

Palestinians have demon-

strated in solidarity with the prisoners almost daily throughout the occupied lands. Scores of Palestinians have been wounded when demonstrations erupted into clashes with Israeli troops.

An Israeli military source said Friday the army sent reinforcements to the occupied territories this week because of the unrest — a turnaround from the policy of the last several months during which troop levels had been reduced.

"In the last week, there was a temporary rise, so the army has increased its presence in the area," the source said.

The strikers — 10,000 of the 12,000 Palestinians held for political or "security" reasons in prison — are demanding the closure of solitary confinement sections in two prisons and better food and medical treatment.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said he would study prisoner complaints if the hunger strikers ended their protest.

Palestinian sources said Mr. Shahal signalled earlier this week he would work to end the hunger-strike. They said his office contacted lawyer Ali Ghuzlan, head of the Arab Lawyers Committee, and local leaders offering ideas.

U.N. rejects Iraqi request to delay experts' mission

BAGHDAD (AP) — The United Nations has refused an Iraqi request to delay sending one of its biggest teams of weapons inspectors into Baghdad next week to continue dismantling the country's long-range missile arsenal, U.N. officials said Friday.

Kevin St. Louis, the U.N.'s chief field officer in Iraq, said Iraq's foreign minister, Mohammad Saeed Al Sahaf, wrote to Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the U.N. special commission overseeing the inspectors, asking him to delay the team's mission until after the U.S. presidential elections in November.

But Mr. Ekeus turned the Iraqis down and said the new team will go into Baghdad Oct. 16 as scheduled.

The U.N. refusal was announced as U.N. officials in Kuwait reported that Chad Hall, an American working in ordnance disposal in the emirate near the border with Iraq, had been arrested by Iraqi security police Thursday.

There was no apparent connection between Mr. Hall's detention and Mr. Ekeus' refusal to accede to Baghdad's request for a three-week delay on the weapons inspectors.

Mr. St. Louis, an American, gave no details of Mr. Sahaf's request. But he told the AP in Baghdad: "We have a clear man-

date to carry on our inspections. We see no reason to either delay or postpone the new team's arrival."

"Ambassador Ekeus has replied saying that it is not within the mandate of the U.N. to take into consideration political issues," Mr. St. Louis said.

Gulf-based diplomats have been speculating that the U.N. special commission, charged with eliminating Iraq's nuclear weapons programme and its arsenal of chemical weapons and long-range missiles, may be sending a larger team than usual to test Iraq's assurances of cooperation.

The Iraqis apparently suspect that the new team will seek to provoke another confrontation with the Baghdad regime so that President George Bush can score electoral points by getting tough with Baghdad.

The U.N. refusal came amid mounting hostility towards the world body in Iraq.

"Our staff members understand the risk involved. We're taking all possible precautions to ensure our safety," Mr. St. Louis commented.

Earlier this week, he requested extra police protection for the inspectors after two U.N. staffers were attacked in the Iraqi capital Sunday night.

Death toll in El Al jet crash may never be known

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Officials say they may never know how many people were killed by an El Al jet that crashed into an apartment building in an Amsterdam suburb.

The charred remains of 50 bodies have been retrieved, and seven identified, officials said Friday.

But many other bodies are believed to have been incinerated in the fire that engulfed an apartment building when the Israeli cargo jet plowed into it Sunday.

Two of the identified victims were not on the original list of about 250 people missing and feared dead.

The transport ministry said the jet's "black box," or flight data recorder, is so badly damaged that British experts have been unable to decipher most of its software.

It has been sent to the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington where it will be examined with more advanced computer equipment, said ministry spokeswoman Marianne Druyvetsteijn.

It was first sent to the British Transport Department's air investigation branch in Farnborough.

Authorities were to issue a formal list of missing persons Friday.

"In a disaster of this type it is highly likely that human bodies have been subjected to forces which render them irretrievable," said Anthony Busuttill, the senior forensic pathologist in the investigation of the 1988 crash of Pan Am Flight 103 at Lockerbie, Scotland. "This is a situation where such disintegration is highly possible."

In the Dec. 22, 1988 Lockerbie crash, Busuttill said, 19 of the 270 dead have never been found.

Meanwhile, the head of the El Al inquiry listed three possible causes for the crash.

Amos Amir listed them as a problem in the engine, the dislodging of a fuse pin, or birds being sucked into the engine. The El Al jet had lost at least one right-side engine before hitting the apartment building in Amsterdam's Bijlmermeer section.

The Seattle-based Boeing Company, manufacturer of the Jumbo jet, asked airlines Monday to inspect the fuse pins that help connect the engines to the wings,

Iraqi guerrillas want Turkey to stop raids

ANKARA (Agencies) — Iraqi Kurds want Turkey to stop cross-border air raids against Kurdish guerrillas from Turkey, whom they are fighting to oust from northern Iraq, an Iraqi Kurdish spokesman said Friday.

"We expect the raids to cease," Safen Dizayee, Ankara representative of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), one of the two major Iraqi Kurdish guerrilla groups, told Reuters.

He said the air raids on the rebels of the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) created risks for the Iraqi Peshmergas whose positions were sometimes very close to the PKK's.

"Our forces and their (PKK) forces are very close in certain

parts, sometimes 100 metres apart. There is no way to tell the difference between us and them.

"The air raids in the past have proved no good results, we don't think they will now," he said.

Turkey, apparently relishing the predicament of the PKK, which is fighting for a homeland for Turkey's 10 million Kurds in southeast Turkey, has offered to help the Peshmergas and stepped up its cross-border raids.

Mr. Dizayee said the Peshmergas did not ask for Turkish help and were against outside interference in their conflict.

"We still believe that it is something we can do ourselves. We want all our neighbours to respect our wish for non-

interference."

Defence Minister Nevzat Ayaz said Turkish warplanes made 25 sorties on PKK targets in northern Iraq Thursday.

"Skirmishes and clashes are going on in all sectors (but) the Hakurk area is the most difficult because of the terrain," Mr. Dizayee said.

The Turks say a major PKK camp in Hakurk, near the junction of the Turkish, Iranian and Iraqi borders, is the springboard for attacks into Turkey.

More than 5,000 people have been killed in Turkey since 1984 when the PKK began its campaign for an independent homeland in southeastern Turkey, home to half the country's 10

million Kurds.

Mr. Dizayee said they had no wish to make the fraternal fight which began on Sunday a "bloody battle" and declined to give casualty figures for either side.

"We are trying to force them (PKK) to leave the area or to surrender," he said. "PKK rebels could withdraw into Turkey or Iran. It's a long border and they have the means to do that."

The Iraqi Kurdish parliament passed a resolution Sunday ordering its forces to oust the PKK from northern Iraq, so that displaced Iraqi Kurds could return to their homes and villages.

Iranian 'gesture'

Turkish Interior Minister Ismet Sezgin said Thursday that Iran handed over a Turkish Kurdish separatist guerrilla to Turkey as part of a security deal between the two countries.

"It shows that Iran respects and complies with the agreement," Mr. Sezgin told reporters after he received an Iranian security commission at his office.

Mr. Sezgin signed the deal with Iranian authorities in Tehran last month. The pact requires each country's agreement to crack down on the dissidents of the other inside its borders.

Aid workers evacuated from Somali towns

MOGADISHU (AP) — A Somali militia was poised to attack the south-central town of Bardera, field headquarters for one of the fractured nation's chief warlords, forcing the evacuation Thursday of more than a dozen aid workers.

Another half dozen relief workers were evacuated from the central town of Sacowein, also for security reasons, according to Francis Mwanza, a spokesman for the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) in neighbouring Kenya.

Mr. Mwanza said six expatriates fled Sacowein by road for Baidoa, 60 kilometres away. He had no details on the reported security problems and did not know if they were related to the buildup of forces around Bardera.

Loyalists of ousted dictator Mohammad Siad Barre were reported 20 kilometres outside Bardera, held by a militia of General Mohammad Farrah Aidede, and an attack appeared imminent, said aid officials.

"Siad Barre's men are on an escapement with heavy artillery and it looks like the town could be bombed at any moment," said Paul Sherlock, an official with British charity Oxfam, in the capital of Mogadishu.

"There was an incident there last night, some shooting and looting and someone was apparently killed," Mr. Sherlock said. "We don't know if it was related" to the approach of Mr. Siad Barre's loyalists.

"It is quiet there today, but given the situation, we and the others decided to pull out while we still could and we sent a plane out to pick up people up," Mr. Sherlock said.

The shooting victim was an unidentified Somali, he said, and the foreign aid workers were not directly threatened.

Evacuated were expatriate staff members of Oxfam, Care, the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Save the Children Fund-UK. They run feeding and rehabilitation centres in the town of about 40,000 people.

Since rebels toppled Mr. Siad Barre in January 1991, Somalia has been riven by clan fighting, carved into fiefdoms by clan-based militia and ruled by anarchy and chaos, which has exacerbated a severe drought and caused one of the century's cruellest famines.

Up to two million Somalis are said to be at imminent risk of starving to death. Estimates of the number who have already died vary widely, but experts agree it is well in excess of 100,000.

Clan fighting and banditry — sometimes by clan militias and sometimes by armed gangs with no clan ties — has seriously disrupted the international effort to feed Somalia's starving people.

Some aid officials estimate as much as half the more than 165,000 tonnes of food delivered to Somalia this year has been stolen.

Aid workers were temporarily withdrawn from the southern port of Kisumu last week because of local clan disputes and similar problems have led to the periodic disruption of relief flights to the Western town of Belet Huen.

A battalion of Pakistani infantry is expected to be deployed soon by the United Nations to guard relief shipments at Mogadishu's port and airport. Both have been closed frequently by clan violence and raids by heavily armed looters.

The last of the 500 Pakistanis arrived Sept. 28, and men of the battalion were supervising the unloading of the final shipment of their initial supplies from a freighter at the port on Thursday.

Court rejects suit by Airbus victims' heirs

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Saying the government cannot be sued for negligence by combat forces during wartime, a federal appeals court Thursday rejected a damage suit over the downing of an Iranian jetliner by a U.S. warship during the Iran-Iraq war.

Families of some of the 290 victims sued the U.S. government and military contractors. In July 1988 the civilian airliner, on a flight from Tehran to Dubai, was hit by a missile from the U.S. Navy cruiser Vincennes over the Gulf shortly after takeoff.

The Vincennes captain said the plane was mistaken for a military jet. U.S. ships in the Gulf had been protecting Iraq-bound oil tankers in previous months and had clashed several times with Iranian forces. The U.S. government disclosed recently that the Vincennes, which had just fired at Iranian gunboats, was in Iranian waters when it fired the missile.

Without acknowledging wrongdoing, the U.S. government offered payments of \$100,000 to \$250,000 per victim in 1989. Lawyers for some of the family members called the offer inadequate and sued for damages. The suit was dismissed by U.S. District Judge Thelton Henderson of San Francisco, whose ruling was upheld by the ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

A federal law that allows damage suits against the government excludes claims arising "out of combatant activities... during time of war." The court said the law requires dismissal of the suit.

In barring negligence claims over wartime actions by combat forces, "Congress certainly did not want our military personnel

to exercise great caution at a time when bold and imaginative measures might be necessary to overcome enemy forces," said Judge Stephen Reinhardt in the 3-0 decision.

Since war has many innocent victims, Mr. Reinhardt said, it would make little sense "to single out for special compensation a few of these persons — usually enemy citizens — on the basis that they have suffered from the negligence of our military forces" rather than intentional violence.

Noting that undeclared wars have become more common than declared wars, Mr. Reinhardt said the "time of war" exclusion clearly applies to an "organised series of hostile encounters on a significant scale with the military forces of another nation," ordered by the president.

He also said the "time of war" exclusion must be read into a separate law that allows suits against the government over injuries caused by maritime activity of public vessels.

The suit against contractors, alleging defects in the Vincennes' Aegis radar system, must also be dismissed under federal law, Judge Reinhardt said. Just as the government cannot be sued for wartime negligence by combat forces, he said, government contractors owe "no duty of reasonable care... to those against whom force is directed as a result of authorised military action."

Judge Mary Schroeder joined Mr. Reinhardt's opinion. Judge Andrew Kleinfeld agreed with their reasons for dismissing the suit but also argued, contrary to their view, that the suit involved political questions over which courts have no jurisdiction.

U.N. urges probe into Sudan workers' killings

NAIROBI (AP) — A senior U.N. official has questioned explanations given by Sudanese rebels for the slayings last week of three aid workers and a Norwegian journalist and requested an investigation, according to a memo obtained Thursday.

Autopsies on two of the aid workers showed they were not killed in crossfire during fighting between rebel factions, as the insurgents have claimed, according to an Oct. 4 memo to the U.N. Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA) in Geneva.

Francis Ngure, a Kenyan working as a U.N. driver, and Vilma Gomez, a Filipina nurse with the U.S.-based agency Interaid, died from "a single gunshot wound each delivered to the head," according to the memo from Vincent O'Reilly, U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) representative in Kenya.

"It was close-range, execution style," a U.N. aide said, on condition of anonymity.

They died an estimated three days after UNICEF employee Myint Maung, of Burma, and Norwegian freelance journalist Helge Hummelvoll were slain Sept. 27, according to the memo.

U.N. sources said autopsies showed Mr. Maung and Mr. Hummelvoll died of multiple gunshot wounds from behind fired at close range.

Mr. Hummelvoll and the aid workers were killed after being taken hostage in the southern town of Loa by a rebel commander defecting from John Garang, leader of the main Sudanese branch of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

The United Nations and aid groups subsequently evacuated 12 relief workers from the eastern Equatoria region of Sudan's south where the killings occurred. The aid groups had been caring for 100,000 displaced people in the area.

The Garang faction claims the Maung and Hummelvoll died in crossfire during fighting as the defecting commander, William Nyuton Bany, fled and that William executed Ngure and Mrs. Gomez after the vehicle in which he was fleeing ran out of fuel.

The Nasir faction of the rebel army, which broke away from Colonel Garang in August 1991, claims the Garang faction killed the four aid workers during ambushes on William.

"Throughout this sad episode, the SPLA response can be best summarised as callous, obstructive and deliberately committed to misinforming us," Mr. O'Reilly said in his memo to Charles La Muniere, second in command at the UNDHA.

U.N. Operation Lifeline Sudan, which Mr. O'Reilly headed before becoming regional UNICEF representative, has requested a Saturday meeting of all U.N. and aid agency personnel working in Sudan's vast south, where more than a million people are in need of assistance.

Mr. O'Reilly said the meeting aimed to assess the security situation, decide what relief programmes were possible in southern Sudan and redraw aid agencies' relationship with the insurgents.

Southern Sudan for nine years has been gripped by civil war, with the rebels claiming to have won control of about 90 per cent of the region until a government offensive earlier this year.

Throughout the conflict, aid agencies have tried to work in both rebel and government areas and in 1988, won agreement from both sides to do so officially.

A senior U.N. official, who spoke on condition he not be identified further, said he would advise the United Nations and aid groups to withdraw all aid personnel from southern Sudan in a message to the insurgents that they cannot get away with such flagrant abuse of international goodwill.

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محل واحد للتسوق

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
T-3 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:05	Les Aventures de Bosco
18:30	Operation Mozart
19:00	News in French
19:15	France sur
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:30	News in Arabic
20:30	America's funniest Home Videos
21:00	Prospectives
22:00	News in English
22:20	Feature Film: "Taggart"
PRAYER TIMES	
04:12	Fajr
05:29	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:24	Dhuhr
14:44	"Asr
17:19	Maghrib
18:25	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish, Tel. 840740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terranova Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772611	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Gradual drop in temperatures will take place and some clouds will appear at various altitudes. Winds will be westerly moderate, causing dust in desert areas. In Amman, winds will be southwesterly fresh and seas rough.	
Amman	Min./Max. temp. 16 / 26
Aqaba	21 / 34
Desert	14 / 30
Jordan Valley	20 / 33
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 29, Aqaba 15, Humidity readings:	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
AMMAN 36 per cent, Aqaba 23 per cent.	
NIGHT DUTY	
Dr. Hana Mamour	750197
Dr. Youssef Samour	615648
Dr. Walid Maer	675485
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tash	620115
Fina pharmacy	661912
Fardous pharmacy	778336
Al Asana pharmacy	637055
Nairokh pharmacy	623672
Al Salan pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644915
Shamsi pharmacy	637660
Najih pharmacy	847632
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Emergency	630341
Rescue	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	892228
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	63021
Hotel Complaints	605900
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	7771013
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	623101
Reception	661101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111

HOSPITALS	
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)33200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:00	Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
06:05	New Delhi (RJ)
06:15	Dhahran (RJ)
06:30	Damascus (RJ)
06:35	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
06:45	Colombo (RJ)
06:50	Beirut (RJ)
06:55	Beirut (RJ)

MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in Jds per kg.	
Apple (red)	550 / 530
Banana	500 / 450
Banana (Malabar)	450 / 400
Beans	450 / 350
Cabbage	130 / 80
Carrot	400 / 350
Cauliflower	250 / 200
Cucumber (large)	120 / 80
Cucumber (small)	240 / 180
Eggplant	80 / 40
Garlic	600 / 500
Lemon	220 / 60
Marrow (large)	180 / 120
Marrow (small)	380 / 320
Onion (dry)	180 / 120
Pepper (hot)	200 / 150
Pepper (sweet)	150 / 100
Potato	340 / 250
Tomato	100 / 50
Fig	350 / 300
Grape	300 / 450
Black Grapes	300 / 250
Green Grapes	250 / 200
Onion (green)	550 / 400
Okra	550 / 500
Parsley	550 / 500
Spinach	320 / 260
Spring	300 / 250

OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)	
16:45	Cairo (RJ)
17:25	Beirut (RJ)
18:00	Bangkok (RJ)
18:00	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:25	Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
18:30	London, Berlin (RJ)
18:30	Madrid (RJ)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:00	Jeddah (RJ)
06:05	Sana'a (RJ)
06:10	Paris (RJ)
06:15	London (RJ)
06:20	Rome, Beirut (RJ)
06:25	Cairo (RJ)
06:30	Dubai (RJ)
06:35	Beirut (RJ)
06:40	Damascus (RJ)
06:45	Amman, New York (RJ)
06:50	Istanbul (RJ)
06:55	Paris, Brussels (RJ)
07:00	Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
07:05	Cairo (RJ)
07:10	Jeddah (RJ)
07:15	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
07:20	Larnaca (RJ)
07:25	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
OTHER FLIGHTS (Terminal 2)	
06:05	Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
06:10	New Delhi (RJ)
06:15	Dhahran (RJ)
06:30	Damascus (RJ)
06:35	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
06:40	Colombo (RJ)
06:45	Beirut (RJ)

Hundreds demonstrate in support of hunger-strike

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Up to 1,000 people Thursday demonstrated in front of the International Committee of the Red Cross building in Shmeisani in support of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails who 12 days ago began a hunger strike against poor jail conditions.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) George Habash were among the demonstrators, who gathered in support of the hunger strikers, now numbering 7,000. The demonstration was organised by the United Democratic Assembly (UDA), along with women associations and youth clubs.

During the demonstration, Mohammad Al Abbadi, UDA's secretary, called upon all parties, professional unions and associations to join a week-long strike that will start Saturday. "We have also made an appeal to Red Cross officials in Amman to intervene (to improve prison conditions) to which they have agreed," he said.

Intisar Al Wazir, member of the Palestine National Council and the Central Committee of Fatah, participated in the demonstration and made a plea to international organisations in favour of Palestinian prisoners.

A memorandum issued by the Women's Associations in Jordan (WAJ) to the United Nations Secretary General Boutros Ghali,



Emotions run high outside Red Cross office in Shmeisani

asked him to intervene; "to put an end to the (Palestinian detainees') miserable situation and the arbitrary measures taken by the Israeli authorities which violate the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949." The convention aims at ensuring that, even in the midst of hostilities, the dignity of all persons is universally acknowledged and respected.

WAJ also called for a fact finding mission to investigate current jail conditions, such as soli-

ary confinement, and also to document beatings and medical treatment and food provided for prisoners.

"Our demonstration is only one way of expressing our solidarity," said Haifa Jamal, a member of the Jordanian Women's Association (RAND). "We have reached the stage where we realise that the peace process is not helping our cause. What has it done for us so far?"

"The world must know that the intifada has not faded and we are

against the self-rule project which denies the right of return," she added.

Revolutionary songs punctuated the three-hour demonstration with slogans such as "no for peaceful solution, and yes for the rifle" and "your (prisoners') steadfastness is a cry of anger inside the walls of the Fascist enemy's Bastille."

"We are not against peace," said one 65-year-old woman, "but we still dream of going back to our country."

Amman to host UNHCR meeting on refugees

IRBID (Petra) — The United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Amman is organising a three-day symposium on refugees and displaced persons around the world at Yarmouk University later this month under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

The meeting is expected to focus on the conditions of Palestinian refugees, according to the organising committee at the university. The agenda for the meeting was compiled by the Bashir Al Khadra, and Janvier De Riedmatten, UNHCR representative in Amman.

According to UNHCR, their regional offices can extend aid to any person, who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion or political opinion. To receive aid, refugees must be outside their native country or afraid to ask for the country's protection.

UNHCR aid is also extended to persons who have no nationality, and are unable to return to their former habitual residence.

A total of 35 officials and interested people from government and private organisations in Jordan and abroad will take part in the symposium, the aim of which is to present updated information on displaced persons, and their human and legal rights.

Jordan attends Damascus talks on Middle East power grid

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan begins talks today (Saturday) in Damascus with Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Turkey to discuss plans to link the five nations' power grids. This is seen as a prelude to an eventual connection with the European grid.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Ali Abul Ragheb left for the Syrian capital Friday at the head of Jordan's official delegation. During the two-day deliberations, he will meet with ministers of electricity and energy from the other four countries to study plans for the linkage and inter-Arab power linkage in general, according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Director General Mohammad Saeed Arafah told the Jordan Times that the Damascus

parley will review a feasibility study conducted by a Canadian firm which suggested that the five countries can recover the cost of the estimated \$100 million linkage project after only five years of operations.

Egypt and Jordan have already taken steps towards linking their national power grids and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) has approved a \$140 million loan for the project. Jordan will receive a \$35 million loan from AFESD to carry out its part of the project which entails laying an 11-km subaqueous cable line between Sinai and Aqaba and establishing transformer stations and other installations along a 300-km route which will carry 50



Ali Abul Ragheb

kilowatts. Jordan's national grid was connected with Syria's in 1981 with a 230 kilovolt line which allows the two countries to exchange power supplies.

Islamic Action applies for registration

By Sa'eda Kilani

Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — The Islamic Action Front (IAF) Thursday became the sixth political party to apply for registration since the Political Parties Registration Department at the Ministry of Interior opened its doors on Oct. 1.

Ishak Farhan, IAF's secretary general said "The party is not a coalition between Islamic movements and parties in Jordan." "Discussions among organisers led to an accord that an individual party with independent policy is the best solution to avoid clashes," said Dr. Farhan. "IAF has its own interior regulations, and its door is open to any person regardless of his/her past affiliations."

So far, IAF has around 312 founding members. According to Dr. Farhan, a five-member membership committee has already received around 1000 applications.

The party's doctrine is inspired by Islamic techniques and stresses the principles of shura (consultative council) in Islam as well as democracy.



Ploughing the way forward to inter-Arab cooperation

Horticulturalists sow seeds for agricultural development

AMMAN (Petra) — A four-day conference on the preparation and handling of horticultural products ended Thursday in Amman with the participants calling on the Arab League to revitalise the Arab Common Market.

Delegates from 11 Arab states gathered for the four-day meeting hosted by the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD) which reviewed six working papers and 25 research projects submitted by the participating countries. Discussions focused on the production of fruit and vegetables in the Arab world, methods of storing and marketing products, and techniques of fighting fungal diseases and insects which damage crops.

The conference concluded by calling on AOAD to support joint scientific research programmes and centres for the training of personnel to collect, store, and market horticultural products. A statement issued after the conference recommended that AOAD hold courses to help Arab states exchange expertise in horticultural production. It also stressed the need to expand services which help guide producers to the best horticultural products on the market.

The statement ended by urging the Arab League in Cairo to end the suffering in Iraq and Libya by helping to terminate sanctions and urged Arab states to extend humanitarian aid to Somalia whose people are facing starvation.

Food for thought

AMMAN (J.T.) — Scottish shortbread, Japanese tempura yakitori, Polish bigos, German sauerkraut, Italian lasagne, and American apple pie were just some of the dishes on offer Friday at the International Community School's 9th Food Fair.

Headteacher Wendy Bataineh explained that the jamboree was "to celebrate the international nature of the school" which has 120 pupils from up to 20 different countries.

Mrs. Bataineh said that the money raised by the fair will go towards expanding the school's extracurricular activities.

Ambassador praises Jordan-Italy relations

AMMAN (J.T.) — Italy's new Ambassador to Jordan, Ronald Bettini, Thursday underlined the importance of promoting Jordanian-Italian relations and his determination to further cooperation in all possible fields.

Addressing a ceremony held in his honour by the Jordanian-Italian Friendship Society, Dr. Bettini said that the Society should continue in the exchange of culture, tourism and expertise between Rome and Amman. The Society's President, Mr. Abdul Rahman Al Bahri, welcomed Dr. Bettini and outlined the activities organised by the 230-member association.

These include Italian language courses and a planned exhibition of Jordanian art in Italy. The ambassador said that this year Italy became Jordan's most important client in the number of tourists which visit the country and Italy is the second most important European commercial partner after Germany.

Dr. Bettini said that the Italian government has a special interest in Jordan and is deeply concerned about the establishment of peace and security in the region. He also said that Alitalia (the Italian airline) was playing a key role in promoting bilateral links between the two countries.

Alitalia was one of the first European airlines to resume flights to Jordan after the Gulf crisis.



BEATLES FOREVER: From Liverpool cells to The Hollywood Bowl, from German strip clubs to Buckingham Palace, and from 'I want to Hold Your Hand' to the 'White Album', The Beatles inspired generations with their music and their success. October marks the 15th anniversary of the release of the Beatles' first parlophone single, "Love Me Do" and the occasion will not go unnoticed. The British Council in Amman will remember the group throughout October with a host of activities which includes a number of Beatles films and a poster exhibition charting the progress of the band through the sixties and seventies. A "Hard Day's Night" will be shown on Oct. 10 at 7 p.m. and Paul McCartney's "Broad Street" will be shown on Oct. 19 at the same time.

WHAT'S GOING ON

* Exhibition of oil and watercolour paintings entitled "Concepts in the Structure of Space" by Dr. George Sayegh at Abdul Hameed Shouman Foundation Gallery — (Open 10 a.m. till 5 p.m.)

* Art exhibition by Ahmad Nawash at Alia Art Gallery.

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On Sunday, 11th of Oct. 1992, at 8:00 p.m.

at Al Hussein Sports City Cultural Palace — Amman.

Tickets are available at the entrance for JD 5 and JD 3.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King Hussein congratulates President of Uganda

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday sent a cable to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, congratulating him on his country's national day. The King wished President Museveni continued good health and happiness and his country future prosperity.

Princess Alia meets women in Husseinieh

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein Thursday paid a visit to Husseinieh sub district, where she met with women from the local community and discussed means of support for income generating projects. Princess Alia's visit was aimed at identifying the needs of rural women in this area and studying methods for marketing their products to help enhance their family incomes. Princess Alia handed gifts to girls from Husseinieh schools and later attended a celebration held by the Armed Forces Education Department in Husseinieh to celebrate King Hussein's recovery and safe return.

Prime minister visits Armed Forces Headquarters

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Thursday visited the Armed Forces Headquarters where he met the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleb to discuss issues of interest.

Noor Al Hussein Foundation announces competition

AMMAN (Petra) — Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) Thursday announced the rules of a contest for children's literature. These state that work should be written in simple but correct Arabic, in the form of a short story, novel, play, or poetry. However, only one piece of work may be submitted per entrant. NHF said that the deadline is 1 June 1993. The results of the competition will be announced in October to coincide with the Arab Child Day.

Bataineh visits Maan Government Hospital

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Aref Bataineh Thursday inspected progress of work at Maan Government Hospital, and was briefed by the director on the hospital's needs. Later he visited Maan health centre and the chest diseases centre where he inspected progress of work. Dr. Bataineh was accompanied by senior Ministry of Health officials.

King Hussein and Prince Mohammad bridges closed Oct. 12

AMMAN (Petra) — The King Hussein and Prince Mohammad bridges over the river Jordan will be closed for traffic on Monday Oct. 12. Only 500 people will be allowed to cross to the West Bank on Sunday October 11, according to a spokesman for the Public Security Department.

EIB contributes JD4,995,000 to water networks in Irbid and Ramtha

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and the European Investment Bank Thursday signed a finance agreement under which the EIB will contribute JD4,995,000 in European-currency-units towards the maintenance of the water networks in Irbid and Ramtha. The contribution is the outstanding balance of the third financial and technical protocol between the Jordanian government and the EIB.

403 traffic accidents in last week of September

AMMAN (Petra) — Seven people were killed and 188 others injured in 403 driving accidents which occurred in Jordan during the last week of September, according to the Public Security Department's traffic section.

Red Crescent Cross Societies to meet in Abu Dhabi

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) will take part in the 22nd Conference of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies, which will be held in Abu Dhabi on Nov. 10. The three days conference will discuss issues relevant to Red Cross and Red Crescent work at the international level. The Jordanian delegation to the conference will be headed by President of the JNRCS Ahmad Abu Qoura.

Accounts show JD 11.5 million sales

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Civil Service Consumer Corporation (CSCC) sold JD 11.5 million worth of foodstuff and other commodities in the first nine months of 1992, according to Corporation Director Mohammad Al Abdallat. Up to 135,000 employees and their beneficiaries benefit from the corporation's services, and 80 per cent of goods on sale are made in the Kingdom.

UNRWA plans for winter

AMMAN (Petra) — Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Iftar Turkmen had a meeting in Amman Wednesday with Adel Irshaid, director general of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Discussions dealt with services offered by the agency to Palestinian refugees in Jordan and a campaign to raise funds for UNRWA's operations in the coming winter season.

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An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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Move goes 2 ways

ISRAEL'S LIFTING of its veto over the participation of Palestinians from the diaspora in the multilateral phase of peace negotiations goes some way towards official Israeli acceptance of the Palestinians as one indivisible people who should win its own independent state. The Israeli move, while it does not go far enough, effectively erases a main stumbling block that has prevented the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks from registering any meaningful progress thus far. In broader terms, the implications of Israel's new flexibility could mean a positive step towards recognising the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as a full partner in the negotiating process. This is something that the Palestinian side has been insisting on ever since the peace process was launched over a year ago.

The Israeli stance can be met by a meaningful response from the Palestinian side. The most potent and ready response that the Palestinians can come up with is to put their own house in order by ending the bickering among the various factions, whether inside or outside the PLO umbrella.

Palestinian differences have taken a dangerous turn in recent times when Hamas activists fought Fatah elements over policies and tactics employed by the leadership on handling the peace talks. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) jumped in the fray when they more than two weeks ago joined Hamas in calling on the Palestinian negotiating teams to boycott the peace talks pending the resolution of their grievances with the basis on which the negotiations are being conducted.

Any new attempt to deal with the Palestinians as people can thus be effectively frustrated if the various Palestinian factions continue their counter-productive infighting, without taking advantage of new positive developments. Speaking with one voice can also win back for the PLO recognition from Washington and the other major capitals of the world as an indispensable party to the peace negotiations. It is an American contention that the U.S. had to suspend its dealings with the PLO essentially because the Palestinian organisation was not able to exercise proper control over the actions of its constituent factions.

Now that Palestinian representatives from outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip can and will join the multilateral talks they can be expected to contribute in a manner commensurate with the seriousness of the genuine search for a permanent and just settlement of the Palestinian conflict.

The first step in that direction could be the assertion of a singular leadership that draws its strength from the democratically-elected Palestinian National Council (PNC) as well as from the projected free elections in the occupied Palestinian lands to elect a Palestinian assembly. It is high time that the Palestinian people were accorded the right to choose their representatives freely, something they have been denied for so long.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I ARABIC daily drew attention to a visit to the region by the Italian foreign minister, Emilio Colombo, close on the heels of the one conducted by his French counterpart, Roland Dumas. It is interesting to notice that the two ministers' itineraries were the same: Israel, Syria and Egypt, said the daily. It said that the two ministers are of course dealing with questions related to the Middle East crisis and the ongoing peace efforts for a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Coinciding with the visits, there are statements coming out of Europe that the European Community would like to play a more realistic role in helping the two sides find a settlement in the Middle East, with probably a great deal of funds to finance socio-economic projects and improve the economies of the countries involved in the Middle East question, the paper added. But it said it should be frankly stated that any ideas about partial solutions and separate peace treaties are totally rejected by the Arab parties which have been insisting on a comprehensive solution. If the ministers' visits focus on separate solutions, then their moves can only be described as the worst underhanded dealings on the part of the Europeans to date, continued the daily. It said that while the Arabs welcome a more positive European role in this matter, they can not accept a solution that falls short of a comprehensive and durable peace acceptable to the coming generations and a settlement to the Palestine issue as well as the other questions. While criticising the Europeans for singling out three states for talks on a solution, the paper wished the Italian minister success in his endeavour if it is aimed at a comprehensive and lasting solution, based on justice.

AL DUSTOUR daily focused its readers' attention on the plight of the Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli jails and the torture they constantly receive from the Israeli tormentors. The hunger strike staged by thousands of these detainees should serve as a cry of help to the conscience of Arabs and Muslims demanding freedom from oppression, said the daily. It is regrettable to see the world community looking on and not doing anything to end this dastardly torture committed by the Israelis against the inmates, who seem to be determined to carry on with their hunger strike until conditions in prison improve and until the world wakes up to their cries, said the daily. The paper said that these detainees do not need our sympathy and our condemnation of the Israeli atrocities against them, but rather a practical action at the world level and genuine assistance for the steadfast people in the occupied Arab lands, said the daily. As we see the steadfast relatives and friends of the detainees in the occupied lands manifesting solidarity with their kinsmen, the other Arabs and Muslims outside are doing nothing, and not offering financial and material help that would alleviate the Palestinians' sufferings, the paper said. Arab and Islamic countries' diplomatic efforts should be launched at all levels and all forms of pressure should be exerted on Israel to stop its crimes against the defenseless population, demanded the paper. It said that mere slogans and statements can achieve nothing for the Palestinian people.

Jerusalem — between authority and sovereignty

By Izzat R. Dajani

"JERUSALEM is a major problem. Anyone who believes that only Jewish aspirations focus on this city is living in a dream world. Arab aspirations will have to find some measure of satisfaction as well."

This was stated in a speech at the Harvard Law School in 1990 by Mr. Yehoshafat Harkabi, former chief of the Israeli Military Intelligence, and a professor at the Hebrew University. Yet since Israel's occupation of the land of East Jerusalem in the 1967 war, there have been circumventing efforts to transform the status of the city and change its identity by the Israeli occupying forces.

Israel illegally, and in disregard to international law, annexed the city. It built large settlements in and around the Arab quarters. It confiscated land and demolished houses that always belonged to Arab owners so as to create a larger Jerusalem inhabited mostly by Jewish settlers and render eventually the Arab characteristic of the city, meagre and forlorn.

This settlement morass was clearly characteristic of Israel's disregard of the Geneva Accords and U.N. resolutions.

Even Israel's staunchest allies objected to Israel's annexation of the city. A long-standing American policy maintained the commitment that "the U.S. does not recognise Israel's annexation of Jerusalem and believes the status of the city to be the subject for negotiations."

Yet, over the span of its existence of forty four years, Israel understood the importance of gearing its historical claims over Palestine, including Jerusalem, by applying the tools for people's "differing perceptions to fact" vis-a-vis "simple fact," whereby the former carries greater charge of recognition.

In this context, Israel drilled in many misperceptions that were picked up as solid facts by peoples and states alike. Characteristic of this, Jerusalem is constantly thought of as an Israeli city by most people in the Western

hemisphere, whereby Arab rights, including their very existence, are hardly recognised or even remembered, irrespective of the "absolute fact" governing them. This was highlighted by a statement that appeared in the New York Times, April 1, 1990 and was presented as an appeal by Hadasah, The Women's Zionist Organisation of America:

"We ask you to write to President Bush today. Tell him: — That Jerusalem must never again be divided.

— That Jews have the right to live anywhere in Jerusalem.

Let your representatives and Senators know how strongly you feel about the unity of Jerusalem under Israeli sovereignty."

Every word in this appeal addresses the very perceptions to fact by the would-be readers for their ultimate belief in the absolute claims of the statement. Many "buzz" words were used such as divided; right to live; unity of Jerusalem; and Israeli sovereignty.

The issue of Jerusalem needs to be looked at from various considerations and points of reference, be they historical, religious, political or sovereignty related. To many Israelis, the future of Jerusalem is not negotiable. Their claim extends to the whole city and regard it as the capital and religious centre of the state of Israel, based on historical-religious background. Ironically, in this context such claims would not extend very far, as the Jewish Empire of David, who captured the City around 1000 B.C., and Solomon, who ruled around 970 B.C., did not last longer than 75 years. Upon Solomon's death, about 930 B.C., the Kingdom of Israel split into Israel and Judah where the Assyrians destroyed the former, around 720 B.C., and the Babylonians invaded the latter around 600 B.C. In both incidences, the Jewish inhabitants were removed into captivity. The historical fact that Israel constantly tried to ignore was the pre-1000 B.C. period when the Canaanite family (basically Arab

tribe) built, controlled, and ruled the city of Jerusalem and the greater parts of the land of Palestine, from about 4000 B.C. Hence the Israeli historical-religious justification for their sole rule and control over Jerusalem is incomplete and insubstantial at best and void at the very least.

To political and sovereign terms, such dimensions need to be considered according to contemporary references and international rule His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, in his Study on Jerusalem, highlighted the fact that international jurists insist that a territorial change means not just a transfer of a portion of the earth's surface and its resources from one regime to another; it usually involves a decisive change in the nationality, allegiances and way of life of a population.

It thus follows that the Ottomans controlled the sovereignty of Jerusalem, although the city was occupied militarily by the British during their Mandate over Palestine. This means, that sovereignty does not pass from one state to the next simply because land was occupied through an act of aggression or war. Under the Mandate, Palestine included the city of Jerusalem, and remained so until the Jewish state came into being over the greater part of Palestine in 1948. The city of Jerusalem became divided, with its western side, becoming part of Israel. The world accepted Israel's de facto authority over West Jerusalem which extended over authority and not legitimacy as expressed by the whole international community and group of nations.

It is of great irony that Israel should challenge the original Arab inhabitants of Jerusalem, whose established historical presence in it extends back hundreds of years, with that of Jewish settlers who were born outside the city and with roots extending many years into Eastern Europe. If Jerusalem were to remain undivided, then the historical, reli-

gious and political rights of its original Arab inhabitants must be addressed forcefully. Annexation is certainly illegal and will never be accepted according to the international legal dimension to sovereignty which is determined and defined. Apart from the immediate vicinity of the Old City where Islam, Christianity and Judaism have religious-historical references, nothing else in neither Eastern nor Western Jerusalem, carries any historical claims. They only claim that remains there is that of its inhabitants and original land owners, primarily Arab.

It is worthy to note in this context that neither the Arabs nor the Palestinians have ever chosen Israel as their neighbour. It may be argued that this also applies to nearly all other countries as choice of neighbours has never been a practice among nations. Yet, nearly all countries of the world knew their immediate neighbours and shared with them, over hundreds of years, many wars, conflicts, starvation periods, epidemics and times of prosperity. The superimposition of Israel upon countries in the Middle East is certainly a different arrangement. It is non-Arab in an area of absolute Arab descendants.

It is an alien multi ethnic community of semites and non-semites, with diverse cultural affinity, sharing no more than religious utility. Yet, the Arabs now recognise Israel's right to continue to exist - i.e. recognised Israel de facto and not necessarily de jure. Israel's response should cease from being defiant. It needs to understand the limits of power and the forces of history.

The conclusion to this is best expressed by Azzed Dawisha, of the Council on Foreign Relations, U.S.A., when he wrote: "The Israelis, who spent so much time since the establishment of their state perfecting the science of war, have woefully neglected to refine their skills at the art of peace."

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Arabs should stand fast by the demand that all U.N. resolutions be implemented

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

Jordanian papers in the past week gave prominence to Palestinian-Jordanian coordination at the peace talks, the Middle East question, the situation in the Arabian Peninsula, following border disputes with Iraq, and a host of domestic issues.

President Arafat's visit to Jordan and Syria came in time to help promote inter-Arab coordination at the peace talks, said Sawt Al Shaab daily.

What is required of all the Arab parties is to stick hard to a demand for the implementation of all U.N. resolutions concerning the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from all occupied Arab land, a stand which these parties had committed themselves to at their previous meeting in Damascus.

Taber Al Udwan, a columnist in Al Dustour, underlined the depth of relations binding the Jordanian and Palestinian people. He said the visits by the Palestinian leadership, at the official and popular level, to congratulate King Hussein on the success of his operation, and the desire to retain the strongest possible links between Jordanians and Palestinians, reflected deep feelings on the part of the two sides.

Over the past three years, the Palestinians and the Jordanians have been coordinating their position over the Middle East issue and have proved their determination to stick together in the face of all circumstances, said the writer.

Referring to the ongoing peace process, Al Dustour criticised a tour of Egypt, Syria and Israel by French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas because, it is said, the tour could be aiming at concluding an Israeli-Syrian peace treaty.

The paper said that if Mr. Dumas' aim is to achieve partial solutions to the Arab-Israeli conflict, then that would be a real European blow to the international efforts to find a lasting peace in the region.

Abdul Rahim Omar, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that despite the repeated denials that a separate peace is being sought, the Europeans seem to be intent on following separate deals; this is evident

through visits by the Italian and French foreign ministers to the region.

The writer said that it is not surprising to hear people expressing apprehension about European intentions. Arab countries apprehension of the European role was also expressed by Taber Al Udwan, a columnist in Al Dustour.

The writer said that through his tour the French minister gave the impression that Europe was trying its hand at a bigger role in Middle Eastern affairs, and it is indeed clear that Paris wants a major role in the region.

The writer said that the Arabs should encourage the Europeans to play a positive role and should try to be more objective by approaching all, and not only one, Arab party so as to deal with the problem in a more comprehensive manner.

Several columnists turned their attention to Iraq. Abdul Rahim Omar strongly attacked the U.N. Security Council and the United States for their decision to seize Iraqi assets abroad. He said that the Iraqis need the funds to buy medicine and food but the foreign powers are now stealing the very means of keeping the civilian population alive.

The writer said that the colonial powers could seize the funds of other Arab states at will and at any time, under any pretext. This is a dastardly crime committed against humanity, said the writer.

His views were echoed by Saleh Al Qallab in Al Dustour. The writer said that with the seizure of funds, in an unprecedented move by the United Nations Security Council, the world has now entered a new phase that could usher in an economic war that would involve big and small nations.

The writer said that in this economic war all forms of 'blackmail' could be practiced, especially by nations in desperate situations.

Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i, praised the Iraqi people for their heroic endeavours to rebuild their country. It is really a miracle that Iraq is able to reconstruct its economic and scientific installations, he said.

The writer quoted an Italian journalist who had been to Iraq as saying that the reconstruction work and the determination to become self-reliant in almost every field had made the Iraqi leadership stronger than ever before.

His colleague in Al Ra'i, Bader Abdul Haq, criticised the level of support and assistance provided by Jordan to Iraq which is facing the sanctions and whose people are facing starvation.

After three years of the imposition of the sanctions, one can see that the Iraqi people are defiant. But the writer said Arabs in general and the Jordanians in particular should offer material help rather than issuing words of sympathy towards their Iraqi kinsmen.

He said that Jordanian ministries of education and higher education, the Press Association and the Alumni Club of the Iraqi universities graduates can pool their efforts to provide the Iraqi children with their school needs.

Referring to the disputes in the Arabian Peninsula, Mohammed Kawasbi in Al Dustour said that Iraq, sooner or later, is going to face the wrath of the colonial powers, especially the United States, for tampering with foreign interests.

The writer said that Iran had swallowed the bait laid for it in the Gulf by the colonial powers by swallowing up the Abu Musa Island, and it will have to face the consequences.

The writer also recalled that Iran had stabbed the Arabs in the back: Once, by turning against Iraq, and now, by occupying the Arab islands. He expressed the view that Tehran will have to account for its actions sooner or later.

Many Arabs had rejoiced over the overthrow of the Shah in 1979 and they had hoped that Iran would support the Arabs in their fight against colonialism and Zionism, said Naji Aloush in Sawt Al Shaab daily.

The writer said that by stabbing Iraq in the back after fighting the Iraqi people for eight long years, and by occupying the islands in the Gulf water, Iran has proved to be a real enemy of the Arab

Nation.

The writer also noted that Tehran's continued support for the Security Council resolutions against Iraq, particularly the formation of a Shiite enclave in southern Iraq, is a proof of Iran's enmity.

For Salameh Ekour, the developments in the Gulf states could usher in a new era of border conflicts among the Arab states and between Arabs and Iran.

The writer, in Sawt Al Shaab, said that the Arabs had lost Iraq's power through their conspiracy against its people who have served the greatest defensive force protecting the Arab Gulf states.

The writer said that the United States continues to concoct plans aimed at weakening the Arabs and it would not be surprising to see one Gulf state at the throat of another in the near future.

A writer in Al Ra'i reminded the concerned authorities that the winter season was approaching and that measures ought to be taken to save the country many of the shortcomings that surfaced during the past winter season.

Mr. Nazih said that the concerned authorities are not taking any steps nor making preparations for the coming winter which, many believe, could be as hard as that of last year. He said that steps should be taken to prevent a recurrence of last year's situation when a snowstorm paralysed the whole country.

The projected Al Amal Cancer Centre came under scrutiny by Fakhri Kaway, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily. The writer said that the idea of building the centre is great, but what the concerned authorities should ensure is a continued flow of funds to keep the centre going.

The writer said that smokers should be made to pay part of the share since, by smoking, they are causing cancerous diseases to themselves and to others.

Also factories and companies which emit smoke and contaminate the air should be made to pay another share and should contribute to the work and the operation of the centre.

LETTERS

The rules the U.S. has broken

To the Editor:

I AM disgusted with the U.S. Congress' decision to grant Israel over \$10 billion in housing loan guarantees. Why would the American government guarantee loans to a foreign government, enabling it to receive an AAA bond rating in order to get lower interest rates on their loans? The same has not been done for struggling U.S. states and local governments. If U.S. states and local governments received an AAA bond rating, they could provide more services without having to raise taxes (or could even cut taxes).

The loan guarantees provided to Israel will be used exclusively for Israel's Jewish population, which would make the United States government party to an apartheid-type system of economic development. Furthermore, by guaranteeing the loans to Israel, the U.S. Congress is intentionally violating U.S. statutes.

According to the Foreign Assistance Act, the United States should not provide any kind of assistance to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognised human rights. The United States' condition for granting Israel the housing loan was to halt all settlement construction. However, Israel has vowed to continue "security settlements." Currently, there are 10,000 units (not including those in East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights) under construction. These would house more than 50,000 settlers into occupied Palestine and poison the prospects of the Middle East peace talks.

Many reports by internationally recognised organisations, such as Amnesty International, and other international human rights organisations have accused Israel of massive human rights violations.

The U.S. State Department's annual country reports on human rights has consistently documented Israel's violation of Palestinian people's rights and in 1991 found Israel in violation of International Human Rights Conventions and civil and property rights of non-Jewish residents of both Israel and occupied Palestinian territories.

Israel has also illegally seized large tracts of land in the West Bank which are owned by Americans, in violation of the 1962 Hickenlooper Amendment.

The Arms Export Control Act bans military aid to countries using weapons for offensive purposes. Israel has and continues to use U.S.-supplied weapons against civilian populations of the occupied territories and southern Lebanon. Recent reports have linked Israel with arms transfers to South Africa and China and with technology theft and espionage, all of which are violations of both U.S. and international laws.

Moreover, according to International Law, the United States is prohibited from providing assistance to non-signatories of the United Nations Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. Till now Israel has refused to sign this treaty.

The United States of America, "the leader of the new world order", is in violation of both international law and its own statutes by its continuous immense funding of Israel. Arabs must speak out about such hypocrisy committed by a nation which proclaims itself as the champion of human rights. How can the United States call on any country to apply international law when it has been violating international law through its assistance to Israel?

It is said that "rules were made to be broken." The United States of America has taken this saying to heart, especially when it comes to funding the state of Israel. The U.S. Congress' decision to grant Israel over \$10 billion in housing guarantees has proven this.

Dr. Akla Dabbas,
ADC Writer Committee,
Amman.

Cry and echo

To the Editor:

I HAVE read with appreciation the letter to the editor entitled "Cry in the Wilderness" (Jordan Times, Oct. 5, 1992) and would like to seize this opportunity to make the following remarks in this respect.

Mr. Tamari was shocked and took umbrage at "the derogatory remarks and sickly innuendos" Henry Kissinger and his fellows heaped against the Arabs in their interview with CBS on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Israeli occupation of the Arab land.

Mr. Tamari's anger is a natural noble reaction. His suggested draft of apology and his reference of the case of Mr. Kissinger's team to the Arab League add to the irony, humour, and absurdity of the subject.

In this regard one should say with deep sorrow and regret that we, the Arabs, have made of ourselves the butt of the whole world's ridicule. We should look in anger to ourselves. Priority should be given to the cause, not to the effect. It seems to me that we have become used to blaming everyone but ourselves for our setbacks, and enjoy attributing our defeats to the so-called international conspiracies. What should we expect then from people like Mr. Kissinger, particularly at this time of bitter Arab internal conflicts!

Despite the enormous world changes and the horrible lessons of the Gulf crisis, voices propagating utopias and saying that democracy is not meant for us are still strong and influential.

It is true that "to recant from error is a virtue," and it is equally true that "charity begins at home."

Respect is not begged from others. The world respects those who respect themselves. Hence, before reaching a reasonable level of democracy, economic and social prosperity, no Arab country has the right to expect respect from others.

Until then we shall remain crying in the wilderness and be subject to move humiliation and insults of others.

Ahmad I. Amer,
Amman.

Former director honoured

To the Editor:

WE REFER to your report regarding a royal decoration conferred on Mr. Najeeb Fakhoury by the chargé d'affaires of the Royal Netherlands embassy. (Jordan Times Oct. 5, 1992).

We would like to state the following: Mr. Fakhoury was the general manager of KLM in Jordan and was retired effective Dec. 31, 1991. Mr. Murli Poonath has been appointed to congratulate Mr. Fakhoury on his accomplishments.

Murli Poonath,
District Manager-Jordan,
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Jordan cautiously

(Continued from page 1)

bilateral track and we are staying away from discussing specifics until the bilateral talks make substantial progress."

He pointed out that the six rounds of bilateral talks between Israel and the concerned Arab parties have made "no substantial or tangible progress."

"However, we see the Israeli move as positive and as the first step towards wider Palestinian participation in the peace process," said Dr. Tarawneh, a former minister who is preparing to take over as Jordan's ambassador to the U.S.

"Ideally we would like to see no constraints whatsoever on Palestinian representation in the peace talks since the Palestinian (dimension) represents the very core of the Middle East conflict," Dr. Tarawneh added.

Political analysts said the Israeli decision falls short of the minimum level to substantiate the seriousness that Israel claims it has in the Middle East peace process.

"Peres' pointed exclusion of Arab Jerusalem Palestinians and PNC members indicate that he is playing galleries in the West and not addressing the regional audience," said Mustafa Hamarneh, a political science professor who heads the Jordan Strategic Studies Centre.

"Realistically, Israel should allow all Palestinians, regardless of where they live or their membership in councils, to participate in the peace process," Dr. Hamarneh said.

The Israeli rejection of Jerusalem Palestinians as negotiators is based on its argument that any representation of Jerusalemites in the peace talks would lead to questions over its assertion that the Holy City is the "eternal, indivisible" capital.

Israel also opposes PNC members as Palestinian negotiators arguing that the council, the Palestinian parliament-in-exile, is an arm of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) with which the Jewish state refuses to have any dealings.

Many senior Palestinian figures — scholars, academicians, businessmen, bankers, political science professors and economists — who could easily assume the role of negotiators are members of the PNC.

Diplomats here noted that Thursday's Israeli decision clears the way for the Jewish state's participation in all the five multilateral forums.

"Needless to stay the intervention of the European Community (EC) had a major influence in the Israeli decision," said a Western diplomat, noting that French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and Italian Foreign Minister Emilio Colombo have visited Israel, Egypt and Syria in the past month.

The multilateral phase of Arab-Israeli peace-making opened in Moscow in January, two months after a historic conference was held in Madrid, Spain, to launch the process. Working groups were set up to tackle the various regional issues and disputes in Moscow and are chaired by non-regional players.

Israel has refused to attend two of the forums — on regional economic development and refugees — since diaspora Palestinians participated with the blessing of the U.S. and Russia — the co-sponsors of the peace process. It argued that the "Madrid formula," which it interprets as restricting Palestinian representation to those living in the occupied West Bank, excluding Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, should apply to all peace talks, whether bilateral or multilateral.

It attended the two meetings so far on multilateral working groups on arms control, water and the environment where the Palestinian participation fell within its interpretation of the "Madrid formula."

The second meeting of the working group on regional economic cooperation chaired by the EC is scheduled to be held in Paris on Oct. 9 and the group on refugees chaired by Canada will meet in Ottawa on Nov. 11.

Agencies add: The Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) Friday dismissed the Israeli move as Palestinian participation in peace talks and reaffirmed a call for the PLO to withdraw support for the talks.

Tayseer Khaled, a member of the politburo of the DFLP and of the PLO Executive Committee, said the offer still ignored basic rights.

"The insistence of (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin's government on rejecting the participation of members from Jerusalem and representatives of the PLO is a rejection of discussing the rights of return of refugees," he told Reuters in Amman.

"In light of these conditions by Rabin's government, the leadership of the PLO ought to declare from its side the suspension of (Palestinian) participation in the next negotiating round in Washington," he said.

Israel sceptical over Egyptian efforts

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Both Israel and Syria have said the time was not ripe for such a meeting. The summit idea came after considerable progress was made at last month's peace talks in Washington when the two sides discussed the possibility of exchanging peace for the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas last week visited Egypt, Syria and Israel to push the peace talks forward. His Italian counterpart Emilio Colombo, visited Cairo this week and later travelled to Syria.

Asked about a possible Syria-Israeli summit, Mr. Dumas said it was "out of context. There is no need to concentrate on a specific point when the time is not right for it."

"We concentrated on all angles of the peace process, especially

concerning the Palestinians." Meanwhile Israeli hardliners Friday attacked the government's decision to allow diaspora Palestinians in regional peace talks, saying they may raise issues the Jewish state wants to avoid.

Benny Begin, a leading member of the right-wing Likud bloc, chided the government for "a very important achievement, to my regret, for the PLO and its supporters."

He said that Arab delegates "will, of course, bring up the right of return," a topic Israel refuses to discuss.

In the past, Israel said allowing a role to outside Palestinians could revive the demands of those exiled with the founding of Israel in 1948 to return to their former homes.

Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin, in an interview on Israel Radio, said the government's view remained that "we are ready to accept the issue of the right of return."

Willy Brandt

(Continued from page 1)

to the Berlin Wall, which went up in 1961 one month before his first unsuccessful attempt to win election as chancellor, prompted Mr. Brandt to seek "German-German detente" which later became "ostpolitik."

Appointed foreign minister in the "grand coalition" of SPD and Christian Democrats in 1966, after his second try for the chancellorship, Mr. Brandt launched detente by opening diplomatic relations with Romania and Yugoslavia.

In 1969 he became chancellor in a coalition with the Liberal Free Democrats and pushed for treaties formally recognising for the first time the post-war boundaries between the two Germans.

He signed a landmark non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union in August 1970 and later year normalised relations with Poland, the country most devastated by Nazi tyranny.

Thousands turn out to march

(Continued from page 1)

centre, the first of its kind to be built in Jordan. Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, who visited the centre twice in one week last month, has called on the public to be gener-

ous in contributing to the centre.

It was clear from Friday's march — the support of the security forces and all other official apparatus and media — that the government has

thrown its full weight behind the project.

The 100-bed centre will provide patients with comprehensive treatment, ranging from nuclear therapy units to outpatient clinics and bone-marrow transplant facilities.

"It will strive to be a centre of excellence to provide people

in the region with the much-needed cancer detection and treatment facilities," Dr. Khatib said.

"We hope the centre will be operational by this time next year," he said. "We hope to inaugurate it on the occasion of His Majesty King Hussein's Birthday (Nov. 14)."

Beyond economic growth: Taiwan in the 1990s

Change is sweeping the world. Nations are disintegrating, political systems are crumbling. Democratisation, economic freedom, and social pluralism are trends that are reshaping the globe. In the last forty years, the Republic of China has undergone peaceful transformations no less startling.

Nine economic development plans have been successfully completed, changing the island from an economic backwater into a world economic power. Taiwan's GNP has risen from \$1.2 billion in 1951 to \$180.3 billion in 1991. Taiwan now ranks 20th overall in the world. Per capita income has risen from \$145 in 1951 to \$8,815 in 1991. This year it is expected to exceed \$10,000. No wonder the words "economic miracle" are often heard in conjunction with Taiwan.

But rapid economic development also has spawned its share of problems. Though the citizens of the ROC certainly enjoy a higher standard of life than ever before, they also find themselves confronted with a number of problems in need of urgent solutions. The island's infrastructure is overburdened, the environment is deteriorating, and cultural development has failed to keep pace with economic progress. The time has come to make some changes. Though economic growth and productivity are still important, the ROC is now focusing more on democratisation, improving the quality of life, and seeking to nurture a cultural renaissance, all of which ought naturally to be the well-earned dividends of economic development.

Central to achieving these goals is the ROC's Six-Year National Development Plan. Of the \$303 billion outlay involved in the plan, the greatest portion has been earmarked for alleviating the island's infrastructure problems.

The frequent traffic jams make the island's roads and highways into "nothing closer to parking lots; and the traffic snarls in Taipei are one thing a visitor is likely never to forget. A number of projects have been designed to take care of such infrastructural shortcomings. In the works are six major urban rapid transit systems, a whole series of cross town

highways, and a second major freeway. The island also hopes to dredge more deep-water harbours and expand existing international airport facilities.

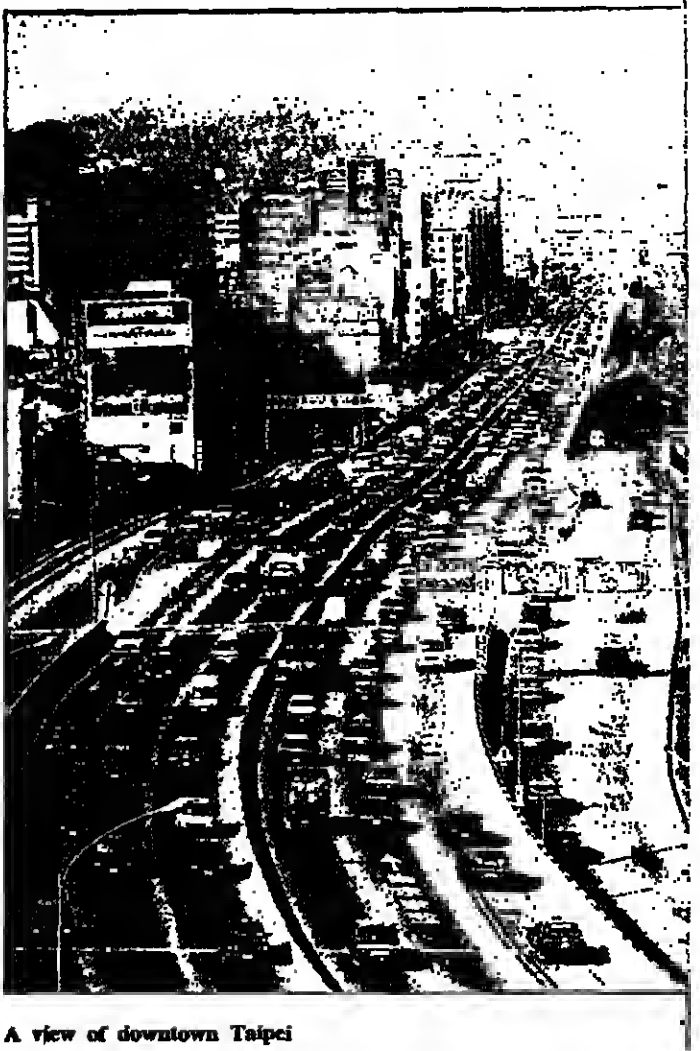
Easing urban overcrowding is the second greatest priority of the plan. Mass public transit systems will be extended from major metropolitan areas into the suburbs and surrounding bedroom communities. This will allow people to commute quickly and comfortably to major urban areas while living in less congested spaces, thus helping to alleviate the overcrowding. Because of the high cost of property and rent, the government is committed to constructing several hundred thousand units of public housing around the island for low-income families. Loans will also be available for families wishing to buy their own homes. With a higher standard of living and more leisure time, residents are also demanding more recreational areas, and to meet this demand, the six-year plan calls for the establishment of forty-seven recreational spots.

Industrialisation has also led to serious pollution problems. Taipei's unhealthy air and the fetid Tamsui River are two of the most obvious examples of what can happen when pollution goes unchecked. Funds in the six-year plan have been allocated to help solve these and other problems. After all, if Taiwan residents are going to use all their new recreational spots, they do not want to have to worry about their health.

Democratisation and political liberalisation are a major focus on the island's agenda. Since martial law was lifted in 1987, the island has made great strides in this direction. Nineteen ninety-two is the year of constitutional reform, for the Republic of China. Not since the original formulation of the constitution has there been an event of such political significance for the ROC — it is entering the ranks of the world's democracies. The democratically elected National Assembly has been entrusted with the responsibility of amending the constitution. In May, the assembly successfully completed the second phase of the reform process, approving eight reform measures.

Many people complain that cultural development has failed to keep pace with economic progress and that a crass materialism prevails. Writers, artists, and dancers say that serious art — traditional and modern — is threatened and has only a limited following. However, people seem to have grown tired of karaoke clubs and MTVs. A definite hunger for the finer things in life is growing, and a number of government and private foundations have come forward to nurture this trend by offering professional as well as financial support for the arts. Among the most notable are the Council for Cultural Planning and Development and the International New Aspect Cultural and Educational Foundation.

ROC citizens have made impressive economic achievements in just a few decades. Of course, they wish for continued prosperity and success. The six-year National Development Plan articulates some of those desires and will hopefully make the ROC the transportation and financial hub of the Western Pacific region by the turn of the century. But with continued economic success, the Chinese in Taiwan also have their eyes set on the loftier goals of democratisation and greater political liberalisation, further economic advancement, helping their less fortunate compatriots on the Chinese mainland, and of course, realising the ultimate objective of a unified, democratic, and prosperous China.



A view of downtown Taipei

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Habash

(Continued from page 1)

the PLO and an effective escalation of the uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories only if Mr. Arafat abandoned the U.S.-brokered talks and sought a settlement through an international framework.

The new alliance emphasised "all forms of struggle and all methods of fighting," Dr. Habash said.

"In addition to armed struggle, popular uprising should be used to regain our rights. These are the main ideas in my mind now as we face the coming years in our struggle," said the soft-spoken doctor who formed his revolutionary front 25 years ago.

Dr. Habash, famous for a series of dramatic hijackings in the 1970s, said he never counted on seeing a Palestinian state in his lifetime.

Dr. Habash, reflecting on four decades of struggle, said while he recognises the world has changed, he has never wavered in his faith in armed revolution.

"I did not struggle in the belief that the goals I had set and upheld would become realised in my lifetime," said Dr. Habash, who had a stroke and is partially paralysed.

A furor erupted in France when he went into a Paris hospital in February. Several senior officials had to resign.

"A friend asked me... 'when would you and I return to our hometown Lydda.' I told him that I could not say when but even if our struggle goes on another thousand years we would continue to fight to attain our cause," Dr. Habash said.

"I did not fall into the mistake of saying that the Palestinian state was a stone's throw away," he said, referring to one of the favourite expressions of Mr. Arafat.

The Marxist PFLP hit the headlines in 1970 by hijacking four Western airliners and blowing three of them up in Jordan.

The commando group has also launched countless raids into Israel, including a 1970s attack which killed 27 people at the airport in Dr. Habash's hometown, Lydda, now known as Lod.

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CIS leaders dilute economic cooperation plans after protests

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (R) — Commonwealth leaders Friday agreed to create a special inter-republican body to help integrate their weak economies but stopped short of giving it full executive powers after protests from Ukraine.

They also agreed in principle to coordinate their economic legislation more closely and to create an inter-governmental bank to help manage the money supply and credit among those ex-Soviet republics which chose to retain the rouble currency.

Uncontrolled issue of roubles and rouble credits by the former Soviet republics has undermined efforts to tighten monetary policy and unleashed inflation, which is forecast to be at least 1,000 per cent in Russia in 1992.

Yevgeny Gorelik, spokesman for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), said the leaders had agreed to create a consultative economic commission under the control of CIS presidents and prime ministers.

But this fell short of the Executive Council which Russia and Kazakhstan said was necessary to

restore economic links shattered as the Soviet Union collapsed. "An agreement on the commission will be signed by most states and studied further at the next summit. You can forget about the council," Mr. Gorelik told reporters.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, suspicious of any attempts to restore Soviet-era centralised power, suggested the idea be withdrawn altogether. The other leaders overruled him.

"Kravchuk raised serious objections... the idea (of the Executive Council) has been weakened," Kazakh presidential spokesman Seitazy Matayev told reporters.

The leaders also agreed to do more in principle to integrate their economic legislation, but said the document must be ratified by the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Council.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin Thursday tried to play down splits in the CIS, saying it would not be a tragedy if all states failed to agree on every point. On the eve of the summit he predicted up to nine states would join the

rouble zone. Less optimistic forecasts say just five states could join, with several signing on for the short term only.

These and other differences suggest the CIS is on the brink of splitting into an inner and outer core.

Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Belarus will probably sign all the economic agreements in a bid to stabilise their teetering economies.

But Ukraine could well decline, and will not become a member of the single inter-republican bank for the rouble zone. Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan — which sent only an observer to Bishkek — all plan their own currencies.

"An inter-governmental bank will be formed, but when this will be done is not yet known. Experts are now working on this matter," Mr. Gorelik said.

"If all the problems concerning the rouble zone are solved, then in principle we're talking about the creation of a bank as the first step to restore order to money supply and credits."

After the Russian government freed most prices in January as the first part of its radical economic plans, billions of extra roubles were printed to keep up with demand.

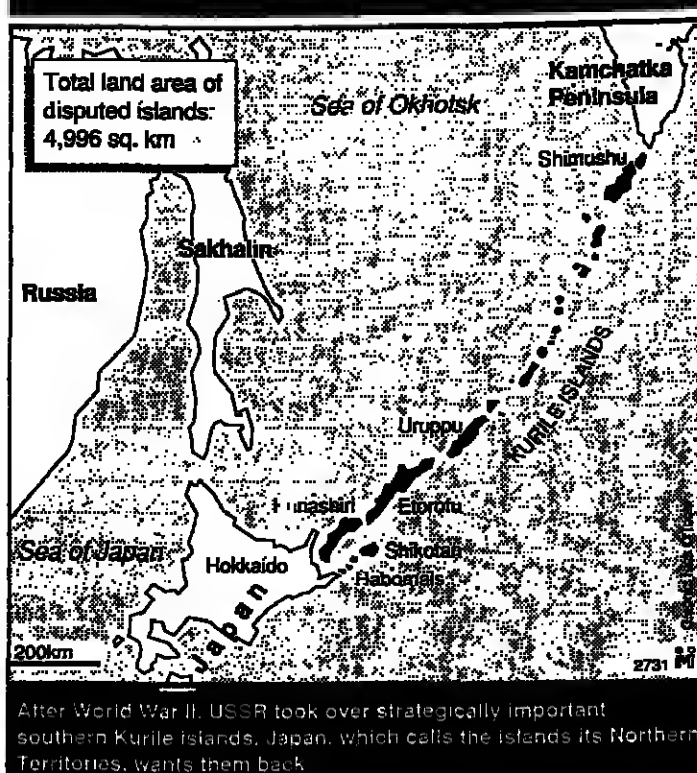
The other republics say they in turn were forced to adopt similar price reforms to prevent being flooded by massive amounts of cheap roubles. These republics have no printing presses, but have issued huge credits denominated in roubles.

Mr. Gorelik said the leaders would concentrate on military and security matters in the afternoon, including what should be done with the former Soviet Union's strategic nuclear arsenal.

The Commonwealth states decided Friday to send a Kyrgyz peacekeeping force to war-torn Tajikistan if local leaders formally agreed, an official said.

"CIS leaders decided to help introduce a ceasefire in south Tajikistan and to send peacekeeping forces from Kyrgyzstan," Rustam Mirzoyev, an advisor to acting Tajik President Akbarsho Iskandarov told Reuters.

The Kurile Islands



Japan welcomes Yeltsin's apparent islands offer

TOKYO (R) — Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe welcomed Friday remarks by Russian President Boris Yeltsin indicating he appeared ready to abide by a 1956 treaty on four disputed islands just north of Japan.

Japanese media quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying on Russian Television Wednesday that Russia was prepared to accept a 1956 Japan-Soviet joint declaration in which it agreed to return two of the four islands — Shikotan and Habomai — to Japan.

Mr. Watanabe told reporters: "It was not an official announcement, but it was the first time (the Russians) gave some recognition to the (1956) joint declaration and that's a fact worthy of some credit."

The four islands were occupied by Soviet troops at the end of World War II.

In the declaration, Moscow agreed to hand Shikotan and Habomai back to Japan immediately and promised to discuss the other two islands, Etorou and Kunashiri, after the conclusion of a peace treaty.

But the declaration was never implemented and all four islands remain under Russian control. Tokyo refuses to give large-scale aid to Russia until it returns the four.

Mr. Watanabe said recognition of the declaration was just a first step and that alone was not enough.

"The negotiation process starts with taking time and gaining Russia's understanding that sovereignty over the islands lies with Japan," he said.

Meanwhile, Ashes of 184 Japanese prisoners of war captured by the Soviet army in the World War II will be returned to Japan, ITAR-TASS News Agency said Friday.

The agency said their remains were exhumed to Birobidjan, Administrative Centre of the Jewish Autonomous Region in Russia's Far East. After cremation the ashes would be sent to Japan.

Major calms Conservative fears of federal Europe

BRIGHTON, England (R) — Prime Minister John Major promised his sceptical Conservative Party Friday he would never allow Britain's national identity to be sunk in a federal Europe.

"It's time the distortions were put to one side. It's time to return the debate to reality and away from myth," he told a party conference during which his predecessor Margaret Thatcher openly attacked his pro-European stand.

"I will never let our distinctive British identity be lost in a federal Europe," Mr. Major said, according to extracts of a speech prepared for delivery on the closing day of the annual conference.

During the conference, Mrs. Thatcher published a strong indictment of the European Community (EC) Maastricht Treaty on European political and monetary union that threw fuel on the flames of a debate that threatened to split the party.

Maastricht, she wrote in the European newspaper, was "part of the vision of yesterday." She also rejoiced at the enforced suspension of the pound from the European Exchange Rate

mechanism, an embarrassing reversal of Mr. Major's policy.

By Friday the conference had swung behind Major after a runabout debate Tuesday, endorsing his cautious but determined policy to put Britain "at the heart of Europe."

In his speech Mr. Major said: "Debates over our place in Europe have always touched raw nerves in our party and in our country. I don't find that surprising. There are gut issues at stake."

"It is right to speak plainly and directly, even if for some it is uncomfortable. People must know exactly what is at stake," he said.

"There are great dangers for our country and for our party if we make the wrong choices, and the right choices can only be based on facts, not built on fears," he added.

Countering claims by Mrs. Thatcher and her allies that Maastricht would erode British interests, Mr. Major said: "At the heart of our policy was one objective and one only — a cold, clear-eyed calculation of the British national interest."

election-related posts of interior, justice, information and political affairs ministers.

Park Kwang-Hyun, a prominent lawyer, was named to succeed Lee Tong-Ho as interior minister, while Lee Jung-Won, a former supreme court judge, was appointed justice minister, replacing Kim Ki-Choon.

Low Hyuck-In, former newspaper editor and ambassador to Portugal, replaces Son-Chu-Whan as information minister and Kim Dong-Ik, president of a leading Seoul daily, becomes the new political affairs minister.

A presidential spokesman said Mr. Roh had done his utmost to select politically impartial figures for the cabinet "both in name and fact."

South Korean opposition parties reacted favourably to the cabinet change, particularly the replacement of Lee Sahng-Yeon as NSP chief.

"Our party will cooperate with the new cabinet in the belief that the president and the prime minister will successfully conduct a fair presidential election," main opposition Democratic Party leader Kim Dae-Jung told reporters.

South Korea, which says it has uncovered a huge spy ring working for rival North Korea, said Friday it would request a senior

Poet is 'stunned' at winning Nobel Prize

BOSTON (AP) — Derek Walcott, who won the Nobel Prize in Literature, said he felt "a little stunned" about being selected for the \$1.2 million award.

"I've been calling my family," he said about an hour after learning the news. "I haven't had time to sit in a corner" and write down what it feels like, but "I feel very rich."

Born in St. Lucia in the West Indies, the 62-year-old Walcott has been in the United States about 10 years but returns to the West Indies when he can. He has taught at Boston University for the last eight years and lives in adjoining Brookline.

Asked in a telephone interview what he was saying in his work, he said: "I would try to say something about the experience of being West Indian."

"It's a very rich and complicated experience," he said. The variety of races and cultures in the West Indies produces "a tremendous possibility of an example of unity."

The fact that the different peoples are concentrated on small islands "creates a necessity of sharing," he said.

Leslie Epstein, director of the creative writing programme at Boston University, said Mr. Walcott "examines the meaning of the worlds of antiquity and the modern world, the Third World and the Western World."

"He's also a wonderful colleague. With students, he is demanding and inspiring as well," Robert Pinsky, Mr. Walcott's fellow poet-in-residence at the university, said Mr. Walcott's work combines "the tradition of English poetry and American poetry, and that large anglophone world who are in the one boat of the English language."

"He's very convivial man. He's very kind to younger writers. Interviewed about an hour after he heard the news Thursday morning, Mr. Walcott said, "I'm still a little stunned."

In him, West Indian culture has found its great poet," the Swedish Academy said in awarding Mr. Walcott the prize. "He has an intense belief in poetry and poets, and he has made this one of his themes."

The academy praised his "historical vision, the outcome of a multicultural commitment."

Caribbean leaders hailed Mr. Walcott as some celebrators on his home island of St. Lucia drank champagne with breakfast following the early morning announcement.

Mr. Walcott's prize for literature was praised throughout the Caribbean, a region dotted with tiny island states like Mr. Walcott's own St. Lucia, as a move that will bring increased self-confidence to the long ignored region.

"We are often too reluctant to recognise our own worth," said Cynthia Wilson, a Barbadian actress and director.

"If it is validation we need, this is validation. It should certainly hope to give us a little more confidence in ourselves."

Michael Gilkes, professor of literature at the University of the West Indies Campus in Barbados said: "What's important about the Nobel Prize is perhaps that Caribbean people as a whole will begin to feel more confident about their literature."

level meeting with Pyongyang to demand an apology.

"A telephone message will be sent to the North this afternoon with an offer to meet on Oct. 13," an official at Seoul's South-North Liaison Office said.

He said the South wanted to discuss discovery of a Pyongyang spy ring which Seoul says aimed to reunite the two Koreas under Communist rule by 1995.

Sixty-five people have been arrested in the biggest coup against North Korean agents since the 1950-53 Korean War.

The spy allegations have put a chill on relations, which improved last month when the prime ministers of North and South signed three detente accords.

Meanwhile the United States and South Korea agreed Thursday to continue the suspension of planned U.S. troop withdrawals from the Korean peninsula because of continuing concerns over North Korea's nuclear arms programme.

The decision was announced following a series of meetings in the Pentagon between Defence Secretary Dick Cheney and South Korean Defence Minister Choi Sae-Chang.

A second phase of U.S. troops withdrawals had been scheduled to begin on Jan. 1, 1993 and was suspended in 1991.

COLUMN

Puff away your piles with new cigarette

PEKING (R) — Chinese inventors are claiming huge success with a surprising new product: A medicinal cigarette that smokes out haemorrhoids. Haemorrhoid sufferers who smoke hundreds of Kezhiling-brand tobacco-and-herb cigarettes report their piles shrink and vanish, the official China Daily said. "Qu Shuying, a middle-aged woman who had suffered from piles for 20 years, smoked 200 Kezhiling cigarettes. They cured not only her piles, but also a recurring cough," the newspaper said. Clinical work on 760 patients in northern China showed a 95 per cent cure rate when enough cigarettes were smoked, it said.

Baby born to whale-dolphin couple

TOKYO (R) — A whale gave birth to a baby fathered by a dolphin, a Japanese aquarium said. The "wholphin" was about 1.8 metres (six feet) long at birth and is certain to outgrow its 2.9 metre (9.7 foot) bottle-nose dolphin father soon. Its mother, a false killer whale, is five metres (16.7 feet) long. "It has more of its mother in it, but its colour resembles its father," said Shizuo Kojima, general manager at Eosbima Aquarium near Tokyo. "No doubt they get along," Kojima said. "Even dolphins and whales of the same species don't always make a good couple."

Famed '40s nightclub reopens as strip club

NEW YORK (R) — El Morocco, the famed night spot that was a haunt of Errol Flynn, Humphrey Bogart and other celebrities in the 1940s, reopened Thursday as an upscale strip club with the old decor restored and a new name. Dubbed The Dollhouse by its owner, entrepreneur Peter Stringfellow, the new club is replete with tuxedoed doormen, scintillating waitresses and partying nude dancers. Stringfellow assures sceptics that while his new venture is a topless club, it has 1950s family values. "Yes, it's sexy, but it's nice and soft sexy," he said. "We never use the word 'strippers.' They're dancers, entertainers."

Mr. Spock's rubber ears become a charity hit

LONDON (R) — A pair of pointed rubber ears worn by the character Mr. Spock in the cult television series Star Trek were sold at a London charity auction Thursday for £700 (\$1,170). The ears were donated by actor Leonard Nimoy, who played the planet Vulcan in the classic space adventure series. Auctioned in London to raise money for the city's Boys' Clubs, the ears went to an anonymous bidder. The beige raincoat worn by the late Peter Sellers in his film role as Inspector Clouseau sold for £750 (\$1,260).

Marilyn Monroe nude photo to go on sale

LONDON (R) — Photographs of Marilyn Monroe, including a nude shot taken before she achieved stardom, are expected to fetch hundreds of pounds each at a London auction this weekend. The sale's biggest attraction is expected to be an original print of a nude photograph taken in 1949 when, as a struggling 23-year-old actress, she had desperately needed the \$50 offered by photographer Tom Kelley. The picture, showing her lying on a satin sheet, her face turned to the camera, was later reproduced as a celebrated calendar. Bidding for the print is expected to start at £1,500 (\$2,520), the auctioneers Bonhams said.

Bank staff held at point of invisible gun

DUBLIN (R) — Irish police are hunting a drunken robber who attempted to hold up a bank with an invisible gun. The inebriated man in his mid-20s entered a bank in the western town of Macroom and said: "This is a stick up." He pointed his arm, hidden by a coat, at staff and customers, ordering them to lie on the ground. The coat slipped, revealing he was unarmed. The man told the people in the bank: "It's an invisible gun." He ran off when they started to laugh.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

China maintains verdict on Zhao

PEKING (R) — China Friday upheld the hardline decision that reformist Communist Party leader Zhao Ziyang in 1989, in an attempt to put the ghost of Tiananmen Square to rest. "The plenary session (of the Communist Party's Central Committee) agreed to the report... on the further examination and investigation of the mistakes made by comrade Zhao Ziyang during the political turmoil in 1989," the communique said. The communique said the committee had "agreed to maintain the conclusion made by fourth plenary session of the 13th Central Committee on his mistakes and to put an end to the examination and investigation." The communique was released by Xinhua News Agency and read on radio and television. The Central Committee is a 170-member body that constitutes the top player of party leadership. The decision to close the book on investigations into 1989 was taken just before a key Communist Party congress, scheduled to meet Monday to set a course for China that will soon close to old age the band of elderly leaders now holding power.

IRA bombs explode in London

LONDON (R) — A wave of IRA bombs in London to coincide with a conference of the ruling Conservative Party aroused fears Friday that the Irish guerrilla group could launch a full-scale autumn offensive. Two bombs exploded under parked cars Thursday night near central rail stations, disrupting the British capital's nightlife with a major security alert. One person was slightly hurt. Two other blasts rocked the West and Theatre district Wednesday, causing five injuries. One bomb was in a litter bin, the other went off in an alley. The four blasts were relatively small and the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) tactics seemed a gesture of defiance to the Conservatives, aimed at frightening Londoners and keeping tourists away rather than spilling blood, security sources said.

China air crash kills 9

PEKING (R) — A Soviet-made Chinese aircraft carrying 35 people crashed in northwest China's arid Gansu province, killing nine French tourists and five crew, a local government spokesman said Friday. It was the third fatal accident to China's ageing fleet of Soviet-made aircraft in three months. The flight Thursday from the Gansu capital of Lanzhou to the tourist city of Xian had been postponed for over an hour due to engine trouble, he said. The official Xinhua News Agency said the crash occurred after one of the two Chinese-made engines on the Ilyushin-14 propeller aircraft failed to mid-flight. "Some 30 minutes after take-off, the ground control headquarters in the airport received a report from the plane saying one of the plane's engines had failed, and it started to return to the airport," Xinhua said. "The minutes later, the airport lost contact." Xinhua said. "Upon impact the nose of the plane was driven into the ground and the fuselage broke into two parts. No explosion occurred after the accident," Xinhua said. Deng Desheng, a spokesman for the Gansu provincial government, said by telephone that the impact of the crash crushed the cabin area at the front of the aircraft.

Huge explosion rocks U.S. refinery

CARSON, California (R) — A massive explosion rocked a huge Texaco Oil refinery near Los Angeles Thursday night, sending flames 150 feet into the air and forcing the evacuation of hundreds of people from a five square kilometre area. At least 14 people suffered minor injuries in the explosion and fire, but there were no reports of deaths, Los Angeles Fire Department spokesman Bob Collis said. Firefighters were letting the blaze burn itself out, Mr. Collis said. "It's more or less a standby situation," he said.

U.S. Savimbi will honour poll results

WASHINGTON (AP) Top aides to Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi have assured the United States that his group will honour the outcome of the country's election, despite their charges of voting irregularities, a senior U.S. official said Friday. "I have had private assurances from senior associates of Dr. Savimbi in the last day that they will abide by the results," Herman Cohen, assistant secretary of state for Africa, told the House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee. U.S. diplomats in Luanda said earlier Thursday that Mr. Savimbi, who received substantial U.S. backing during his 16-year war against Angola's government, had refused to answer their calls, and rebel leaders said he had flown to a highland stronghold.

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Bosnian Muslims brace for attack

SARAJEVO (R) — The Bosnian government, showing growing exasperation with the West's aid efforts, is bracing for a feared Serb onslaught on remaining Muslim strongholds and appealing for more help from Croats to repel their common foe.

Serb forces started shelling the central town of Magaj again Friday morning after an abortive infantry attack overnight, but conditions in Sarajevo were quiet, Bosnian radio reported.

In a city that issues daily war death toll bulletins the way other European cities give weather or road traffic reports. "Quiet" meant that just one mortar bomb fell in the city centre at breakfast time.

No one was hurt in the attack, nor were any victims immediately reported from sporadic shelling of the Muslim-held Hrasno area or the usual sniper and anti-aircraft gunfire at crossroads that sent motorists scurrying for cover.

Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic said the siege of Sarajevo could be broken only with outside help because its Muslim defenders were not strong enough to do this alone, Tajing News Agency reported.

The agency, citing a mixture of Croatian and Bosnian radio broadcasts, quoted Mr. Izetbegovic as appealing for "better cooperation between the Muslim and Croat people to the struggle against the common enemy" — the Bosnian Serbs who are in armed rebellion against Bosnia's internationally-recognised independence.

Speaking in military uniform of a new conference in the southwest town of Mostar Thursday evening, Mr. Izetbegovic said Croats and Muslims must not confront each other but defend themselves and work to build their own country after the war.

At another news conference on the same day at the Croatian port of Split, Mr. Izetbegovic lamented the fall to the Serbs of the key northern town of Bosanski Brod Tuesday. He said he was bracing for a fight to defend remaining Muslim strongholds from a fresh Serb offensive.

Bosnian radio said Friday that Serb forces at Gradacac, the most northerly town still in Muslim hands, were bringing in reinforcements from Bosanski Brod to help them capture a town running dangerously short of water and food.

Diplomats have voiced suspicions that there may have been a political deal between Zagreb and Belgrade to allow the Serb capture of Bosanski Brod on a river marking the Croatian frontier in return for possible territorial concessions elsewhere by the Serbs.

At the United Nations, Bosnia's ambassador Mohammad Sacirbey called for Islamic states to deliver relief supplies to his country immediately and lashed out at Western European nations for taking so long to get their troops into Bosnia.

He also said the proposed no-fly zone for Serb aircraft over Bosnia without immediate enforcement helped no one.

The people of Bosnia "would rather have the no-fly zone (enforced) than 1,800 British troops to be provided after two months of promises," Mr. Sacirbey told a news conference.

The United States, Britain and France have compromised on a Security Council draft resolution, expected to be adopted later Friday.

Bush presses attack on Clinton

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush, wrapping up a two-day campaign trip to Texas and Louisiana, intensified his attack on Democratic opponent Bill Clinton's opposition to the Vietnam War two decades ago.

For the second time in two days, the Republican president said he could not understand why Mr. Clinton demonstrated against the war in Britain, where he was a student at Oxford University in 1969-70.

"My opponent has written that he once mobilised demonstrations in London against the Vietnam War," Mr. Bush said in a speech in a Houston hotel Thursday broadcast to more than 100 Republican fundraising meetings around the country.

"I simply for the life of me cannot understand how someone can go to London, another country, and mobilise demonstrations against the United States of America when our kids are dying halfway around the world," he said.

"The issue here isn't patriotism. You can demonstrate all you want here at home," Mr. Bush continued.

"But I can't understand someone mobilising demonstrations in a foreign country when poor kids, drafted out of the ghettos, are dying in a far-away land."

On Wednesday, Mr. Bush said on television he believed Mr. Clinton should "level" with the American public about his anti-war protests and a trip to Moscow he made as a student in 1970.

Mr. Bush did not mention the Moscow trip again Thursday and it appeared his campaign might be trying to backpedal on the issue, which Mr. Clinton says was purely for tourism.

"We're not talking about Moscow... We don't know what he (Clinton) did in Moscow," Mr. Bush campaign official Mary Malin told to reporters in New Orleans, where the president campaigned earlier Thursday.

Roh reshuffles cabinet, vows to fight poll fraud

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Roh Tae-Won Friday sacked his controversial spy chief and four key cabinet ministers, and declared war against corruption to ensure fairness in December elections to pick his successor.

The most important task for the new cabinet is to hold the forthcoming presidential election in the fairest, cleanest and most upright fashion in our constitutional history," Mr. Roh said in a nationally-televised speech.

"The government will deal sternly with illegal and corrupt electioneering... we have to use this occasion to root out elections influenced by the power of money," he said.

He ordered government officials not to side with any political group in the presidential campaign.

"All election-related laws will be enforced strictly and the violators, whoever they are, will be punished in accordance with the law," Mr. Roh said.

Mr. Roh is scheduled to step down as head of state in February after a single five-year term. He is constitutionally barred from standing for a second term.

Mr. Roh and his caretaker Prime Minister Hyung Soong-Jong, who was appointed Wednesday, dumped spy agency chief Lee Sahng-Yeon, and replaced him with the head of Mr.

Roh's private security network, ex-General Lee Hyun-Won.

The outgoing chief of the Agency for National Security Planning (NSP) was widely expected to be replaced because of his alleged role in an election fraud mounted before parliamentary elections in March.

Mr. Roh said that "roles and functions" of the NSP, which has long been criticised for meddling in domestic politics, should be changed. He did not elaborate.

Last month, two government officials and a senior DLP official were arrested on charges of bribing voters in a provincial town, seriously embarrassing Mr. Roh's administration.

Mr. Roh, acting to limit the political fallout from the scandal, last month quit the ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) and pledged to form a neutral cabinet to administer an unbiased election campaign.

His appointment as prime minister of Mr. Hyun, a university president who has spent his entire career in academic circles, was a further step to sweep corruption from the political scene.

Mr. Hyoo and his entire cabinet are now without party affiliation — ministers not replaced Friday have already resigned from the DLP.

As well as sacking his spy chief, Mr. Roh replaced the key

election-related posts of interior, justice, information and political affairs ministers.

Park Kwang-Hyun, a prominent lawyer, was named to succeed Lee Tong-Ho as interior minister, while Lee Jung-Won, a former supreme court judge, was appointed justice minister, replacing Kim Ki-Choon.

Low Hyuck-In, former newspaper editor and ambassador to Portugal, replaces Son-Chu-Whan as information minister and Kim Dong-Ik, president of a leading Seoul daily, becomes the new political affairs minister.

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